



# Trails

## Annual Trail Report - Fiscal Year 2008-09

Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services

6th Edition

Release Date: July 1, 2009

### Identify

100% of projects have been identified in the City's Greenprint or trail database

**22.64 miles** awaiting further development

### Study

83.32% of projects have been or are currently being studied to determine a feasible alignment.

**12.76 miles**

### Plan

72.35% of projects have been or are currently being master planned for future development.

**35.81 miles**

### Design

44.38% of projects have been or are currently being designed, resulting in construction documents.

**4.42 miles**

### Construct

44.38% of projects have been or are currently being constructed.

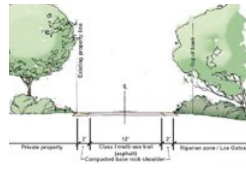
**0.98 miles**

### Open

40.17% of projects are constructed and open to the public.

**51.43 miles**

33.87 (paved)  
17.56 (interim)



## Program Overview

The Trail Program's mission is to develop a 100-mile trail network comprised of 32 individual trail systems as defined by the Greenprint and consistent with the Mayor and City Council's Green Vision.

This is the sixth annual report that serves to update residents, Mayor and City Council, and other stakeholders on progress made over the past 12 months.

The City reached an important milestone this year, with over half of the planned trail network open to the public. A combination of paved and unpaved (interim) trails offer 51.43 miles for recreation and commuting.

Readers of this report will note that many of the on-going projects result in master plans and construction documents. These projects do not provide immediate public access but place the City in an excellent position to competitively pursue grants that can lead to construction and opening of additional trails.

## Program Updates

### Awards and Recognition

The Program's web site was honored by the California Trails and Greenways Conference in April. The Award of Merit recognized the quality and quantity of trail information presented on the web site.

The California Parks and Recreation Society honored San José with an Award of Excellence for development of the \$2.5M Airport Parkway Under-Crossing project in collaboration with the Santa Clara Valley Water District and CH2M-Hill, Inc.

San José maintained its bronze status with the League of American Bicyclists as a bicycle friendly city in part due to the large and growing trail network.

Prevention Magazine, in partnership with Sterling's Best Places and the American Podiatric Medical Association, declared San José the 19th best walking city in the

country, reporting that it has the largest number of hiking and biking trails of any city reviewed.

Access to recreation played a role in acknowledgement from several other publications. BestPlaces.net identified San José as the healthiest city in the nation. Men's Health Magazine ranked San José as the 4th healthiest for men, while Women's Health Magazine saw it as the 6th healthiest for women.

In July MSNBC aired a report entitled, "Building a Bicycle Infrastructure." The report stated, "With more Americans than ever before commuting to work by bicycle, cities from Boston to San José are aggressively investing in biking trails, lanes, and rental and parking facilities."

The San José Business Journal identified the Guadalupe River Park as one of the city's Top 5 attractions.

Two recent publications: "Best Easy Day Hikes – San José" and "Bay Area Bike Rides" highlighted several urban trail systems within San José.



San José's trails are regularly featured in the San José Visitor's Guide, available at the airport and area hotels.

For more media stories about San José, visit the "In the News" link from the homepage.

### Special Designations

In May the Federal Department of the Interior designated San José's Trail Network as part of the National Recreational Trail (NRT). The program seeks to celebrate and preserve the nation's pathways. The NRT designation is for continuous trail systems. San José's core system is defined by Coyote Creek Trail, Highway 237 Bikeway, and Guadalupe River Trail. These linked north San José trails are interconnected. As these trails are expanded and linked to other existing trails, City staff will coordinate with Department of Interior staff to expand the designation. San José was one of 22 trail systems designated nationally. With NRT designation, San José gains greater recognition and access to additional grant funding opportunities.

The U.S. Bicycle Route System seeks to emulate the National Highway System with a bicycle focus. A west coast route (Route 95) has been generally defined. The intent is to include at least one trail in San José as part of

the multi-state north/south route. Trail Program staff hosted a community meeting in February about the Route System which is to be developed in part by the Adventure Cycling Association. Staff will continue to coordinate with the Association and Caltrans as the alignment through California is defined.

### Website Development

The program's website continued to improve over the past year with some notable additions:

- Video slideshows of most open trails and a network overview presentation
- Fact sheets pertaining to Trails & Transportation, Trail Design and Trails and the Silicon Valley Economy
- New "Active Transportation" and "Education" pages
- Complete inventory of interpretive signage, both existing and planned, along the trail network
- Improved homepage layout and appearance
- "Case Studies" about recent trail projects to serve as an educational resource on why and how trail projects can take so many years to develop
- A special page providing an on-exhibit of Bike Show, a collection of historical and artistic bicycles and memorabilia (actual exhibit occurred at City Hall)

### Trail Count 2008

Volunteers from the Friends of the Guadalupe River Park & Gardens, Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition and the Almaden Cycling Touring Club joined with City of San José staff to conduct the second annual count of trail traffic along the Guadalupe River Trail. This year's count was expanded to include Los Gatos Creek Trail and Highway 87 Bikeway. Two 12-hour counts were conducted on consecutive Wednesdays and included one Saturday count along Los Gatos Creek.

Trail Count 2008 documented that nearly 1,000 people use the Guadalupe River trail system daily (an increase of 7% over 2006), a dramatic 86% jump in traffic near Coleman Road was documented largely due to completion of the Airport Parkway Under-Crossing project, almost 1,500 people enjoy the Los Gatos Creek trail on Saturdays, and 58% of people report that they commute regularly to work.



The Trail Count Fact Sheet and detailed Summary Report have been sourced by the Rails to Trails Conservancy as a guide for other agencies to follow in documenting trail usage.

See the “Reports” section of the website for a Fact Sheet and a detailed Event Report about this year’s count.

### Green Vision

The City’s Green Vision sets forth ten goals that seek to make San José the epicenter of the clean technology economy. Goal 10 aspires to 100 miles of interconnected trails by 2022. This ambitious goal supports the aggressive pace of trail development presented in this and past annual reports.

### Guadalupe River Park - Trail Striping

Over the years staff has received complaints about the circuitous trails within the Guadalupe River Park and the difficulty in finding the shortest route for commuting. Trail Count data reinforced this with survey findings.

A centerline stripe was added along the 2.8 mile paved alignment through downtown. Trail users now find a continuous indicator of the route, with directional arrows showing when it is necessary to cross a bridge.



### Call Boxes

Five additional call boxes were added to existing trails. All existing call boxes were converted from analog to digital signal over the past year.

San José seeks to install call boxes at 1 mile intervals as the trail network develops.

### Grant Writing

Staff utilizes a Council-approved prioritization process to rank projects and align them with grant funding opportunities. This approach ensures that the existing trail systems continue to expand in a logical manner and that the City targets grant applications in the most strategic manner. Over the past year, staff prepared six grant applications. As of June, \$1.377M has been secured, with \$3,400,000 pending release of State funding.



Project	Grant / Amount	Status
Lower Guadalupe River Trail	CMAQ / \$1.377M	Awarded
Guadalupe Creek (Almaden Exp to Meridian Avenue)	Prop 84 / \$900K	Pending
Guadalupe Creek (Almaden Exp to Meridian Avenue)	SCCOSA / \$225K	Pending
Lower Guadalupe River Trail (101 to 880)	TE / \$2.5M (Stimulus)	Pending
Lower Guadalupe River Trail	EEMP / \$350K	Not Awarded
Highway 237 Bikeway	EEMP / \$350K	Not Awarded

### Bridge Assessment 3

The trail network has 50 pedestrian bridges of varying age, design and condition. Some bridges in Alum Rock Park date back to the late 1800’s. This year the program initiated an annual inspection of the structures by a licensed civil engineer. This approach ensures that important maintenance or repair work is recognized, documented and acted upon. The City modeled the inspection process after the method used by Caltrans and local agencies for all vehicular bridges. No formal documentation or guidelines were available for pedestrian bridge inspections, so the City’s approach is now serving as a model for other agencies around the country to follow.



## Project Updates

### Albertson Parkway - Cresta Vista Drive to Curie Drive

Construction got underway on October 3, 2008 along an under-developed utility corridor. A substandard paved walkway and weeds are being removed and replaced by a new meandering





paved trail, small passive park, landscaping, storm water retention basins and interpretive and memorial signage. The project should be open very early in the 09/10 fiscal year (est. July 2009).

### **Bay Trail Reach 9B - Alviso Slough, near Gold Street**

Design and environmental work is underway for a 540 foot pedestrian bridge and three under-crossing structures.

When funding for construction is secured, the future bridge and related improvements will link the Guadalupe River system to the Bay Trail and the County's Alviso Marina with its related levee trails around the salt ponds. Project developed in partnership with the Santa Clara Valley Water District, with joint use of lands and technical assistance.

### **Coyote Creek - Montague Expressway to Story Road**



A master plan for the remaining undeveloped reaches of trail is underway. Portions of this trail system are either already open or have been master planned previously, but the current effort makes the

entire 9 mile alignment eligible for future federal funding should it become available. The project will require at least one pedestrian bridge and as many as 11 under-crossings. Expanding the funding sources makes sense for this project, particularly considering the large scope of work required. Project developed in partnership with the Santa Clara Valley Water District, with joint use of lands and technical assistance.

### **Coyote Creek - Tully Road to Los Lagos Golf Course**

Construction began in October and work should be complete for a July 2009 opening of the trail.

The project includes a gateway element along Tully Road to draw the attention of residents and encourage use of the trail system. The trail system will travel alongside the Tully Road Ball Fields and link to Stonegate Park where the Coyote Creek Trail system currently terminates.



### **Guadalupe Creek - Meridian Avenue to Singletree Way**



After a protracted negotiation with PG&E, a recreational easement was secured from the utility. In order to permit immediate public access, a portion of gravel trail was installed, along with some signage and new sidewalk near

Singletree Way entry. These modest improvements extend trail access along the creek and ponds to Almaden Expressway. Project developed in partnership with the Santa Clara Valley Water District, with joint use of lands and technical assistance.

### **Guadalupe River - Alviso to Highway 880**

Construction documents have been completed for development of a 6.4 mile paved trail linking downtown's Guadalupe River Park to Alviso. The City is awaiting final environmental clearance from Caltrans and plans to bid and award a construction contract in fiscal year 2009/10 (est. September 2009). Construction work will commence at 880, and extend northward to Montague Expressway or perhaps to Tasman Drive, dependent upon the bidding

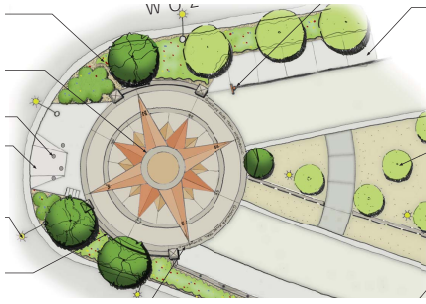


environment. The City Council has identified completion of construction as a high priority for future grant opportunities. The project will incorporate a paved compass medallion at several entry points to

not only offer a sense of direction, but also a sense of place and identity that will likely raise awareness of the recreational opportunity. Project developed in partnership with the Santa Clara Valley Water District, with joint use of lands and technical assistance.

### **Guadalupe River - Woz Way to Virginia Street**

Two grants were secured to address a funding shortfall; however, the State's bond freeze made that funding unavailable. As the fiscal year ends, the City has completed construction documents and an easement from Caltrans in order to proceed. An effort is underway to identify supplemental funds to proceed with a summer 2009 construction start. Similar to the Lower Guadalupe



River Trail project, the new trail will have “compass” pavement designs at the roadway gateways. Project developed in partnership with the Santa Clara Valley Water District, with joint use of

lands and technical assistance.

### **Los Gatos Creek - San Carlos Street to Auzerai Avenue**

Paved trail improvements have been substantially completed by a private developer and fencing has been removed.

Trail users travel along the riparian corridor while seeing remnants of the former Del Monte Cannery which now serve as gateways to the residential community. Interpretive signage at Auzerai Avenue discusses the watershed, history of the Cannery, and history of the communities along the Los Gatos Creek trail system.



### **Lower Silver Creek - Silverstone Place (Foxdale Drive to Ocala Avenue)**

Construction documents have been completed and a recreational easement has been secured from PG&E. Bids have been received for construction of the trail. Construction will commence during the summer of 2009.

Improvements will result in a meandering trail, landscaping, seating areas and retention basins. The landscaped area becomes part of a series of park spaces along the Lower Silver Creek Trail corridor that will someday link Thompson Creek to Coyote Creek.



### **Lower Silver Creek / Thompson Creek - Aborn Road to Tully Avenue**

An interim trail opened along the Creek in June 2008. Preparation of construction documents began in March 2009 and will define paved trail improvements, with gateway elements and landscaping to offer shade along the sunny trail corridor. Project developed in partnership

with the Santa Clara Valley Water District, with joint use of lands and technical assistance.

### **Willow Glen Spur - Los Gatos Creek to Coyote Creek**

A focus group was formed to review opportunities and challenges with development of a trail system that could conceptually link Coyote Creek to Los Gatos Creek.



The Focus Group's information memorandum defines an approach for securing parcels for future trail development. The memorandum will be posted on the trail system's web page: [www.sjparks.org/trails](http://www.sjparks.org/trails) > Trails > Willow Glen Spur.

## **Partners**

Development of trails can only occur through partnerships with agencies, community groups and hardworking individuals. Many of the projects in this report would not be possible without the support of:

- City of San José City Council
- Santa Clara Valley Water District - Board of Directors and Staff
- City of San José Departments and Offices
  - Public Works
  - Transportation
  - General Services
  - Environmental Services
  - Police
  - City Attorney's Office
  - Redevelopment Agency
  - City Manager's Budget Office
- County of Santa Clara
- Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority
- State of California
- Association of Bay Area Governments
- San Francisco Bay Area Ridge Trail
- Adopt-A-Trail Volunteers
- Park Managers
- Friends of the Guadalupe River Park & Gardens
- Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition
- Many residents, bike groups and trail advocates who encourage and support expansion of the trail network.



# San José's Trail Program

*Mission: Complete a 100-mile network of trail systems to enhance, strengthen and connect neighborhoods*



**Annual Trail Program Report**

**Fiscal Year 2008-09**

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